



New Branch Guide

2030 | Training
resources

Who We Are

Comhaltas is a national and international movement, providing opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy and participate in the cultural traditions of Ireland that have been passed down over centuries. As an organisation, we seek to not only preserve these traditions, but strengthen them for generations to come.

Centrally involved for over 70 years in the preservation and promotion of Irish traditional music, song, dance, and the Irish language, we're a non-profit cultural movement with an extensive branch network throughout Ireland and across 20+ countries worldwide.

With its global reach, Comhaltas has forged strong links with the Irish Diaspora, and has promoted a positive image of Ireland's rich cultural heritage on the international stage.

Our Mission

Cultural traditions should be an enriching part of the lives of Irish people everywhere, particularly our young people. They should be a living, highly visible and vibrant part of society; they should be easily accessible to all; and their unique social, cultural and economic benefits should be fully realised by communities and individuals in Irish communities both nationally and abroad.

This is what we aim to share through Comhaltas.



Our Values

Empower



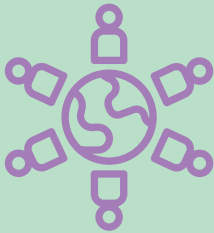
We believe in the intrinsic value of every person, and we aim to further the dignity of all associated with our movement.

Inspire



We want each individual to avail of opportunities for self expression in the pursuit of traditional music, song, dance and language.

Inclusion and diversity



We are all-embracing of everyone regardless of race, religion, or ability. We promote equal opportunity for all regardless of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious belief or lack thereof, race, ethnicity or nationality.

Openness and honesty



We ensure our services are underpinned by fairness, in recognition of the dignity and humanity of each person, free from harassment. We are an anti-sectarian and anti-racist organisation.

Why Comhaltas?

Branches are the heart of Comhaltas, and starting your own branch can have a very positive impact on your community. Here's why you should start one:

PRESERVE LOCAL IRISH CULTURE

Comhaltas plays a vital role in preserving Irish culture and heritage. By starting a branch, you become a custodian of Irish traditions in your local area, ensuring that they are passed down to future generations. This helps maintain a sense of identity and belonging within your community of Irish cultural enthusiasts.

CULTURAL EDUCATION

Your branch can offer classes and workshops in traditional Irish music, dance and language. These can provide a platform for people of all ages to learn, share, and appreciate the richness of Irish culture.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Comhaltas branches are fantastic community hubs, bringing together people who share a common interest in Irish culture. This fosters a strong sense of belonging and friendship.

LOCAL PERFORMING OPPORTUNITIES

Your branch can organise concerts, sessions, and cultural events where local talent can showcase their skills. These performances not only entertain the community but also provide opportunities for local artists to gain recognition and appreciation.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Engaging young people in Comhaltas activities helps them connect with their heritage in a meaningful way. It offers a social outlet based around teamwork, and encourages them to explore their creativity through music and dance.

CULTURAL TOURISM

If your community has a rich Irish heritage, a Comhaltas branch can attract tourists interested in experiencing authentic Irish traditions. This can boost local businesses and create economic opportunities.

CONNECTING THE WORLD

There are Comhaltas branches in over 20 countries worldwide. Having your own ensures that wherever you travel, there will be a branch and social circle waiting for you.

HEALTHY AND INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

Comhaltas promotes active and healthy lifestyles through music and dance. It's an inclusive organisation that welcomes people of all backgrounds, abilities, and ages to participate, whether that be through regular classes, specialised workshops or Irish sessions in a casual, fun setting.

SENSE OF PRIDE

Finally, starting a Comhaltas branch can instil a sense of pride in your community. You'll be part of a worldwide network dedicated to preserving and promoting Irish culture, contributing to a larger cultural tapestry.

Fleadhanna

Attend and compete in the international Fleadh Cheoil at county, provincial and international level



Scoil Éigse

This unique summer school takes place the week preceding Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, with tuition from leading musicians in their fields



Pléaracha agus Scoraíocht

These competitions encourage initiative in the presentation of Irish traditional music, song, dance, language, storytelling and recitation

Comhaltas Events



Concert Tours

Showcasing the very best in Irish traditional entertainment, each Comhaltas concert tour features a fine mix of established artists together with up-and-coming young stars



Sessions and classes

Instrumental, dancing and language classes are great ways to learn and preserve new skills, while sessions allow for sharing tunes and conversations in a relaxed setting



Irish Language

Our native language is a cornerstone of Ireland's rich cultural heritage. Comhaltas events and activities provide a positive environment for use of the Irish language, no matter the proficiency of the speaker

the
Fleadh
down in ennis!

Fleadh Núa

This nine-day festival in May is held annually in Ennis, County Clare, with events including Ciorcal Comhrá, café music sessions, lunchtime concerts, Foinn Seisiún and evening sessions

The interest in Irish Traditional Music has been growing enormously in Brazil. But since we're not traditionally an Irish diaspora country, accessing reliable information on the tradition can be difficult. Comhaltas has helped enormously with this, and helped us get in touch directly with the larger worldwide community of ITM practitioners.

Comhaltas has helped us bring the living tradition of Irish Traditional Music to Brazil in a way that would be almost impossible without it.

Kevin Shortall, Comhaltas Brazil



Growing up in a musical family attending Fleadhanna and festivals annually, I couldn't help but feel nostalgic when I moved across the World. Comhaltas has enable me to connect with fellow musicians abroad and also allowed me become part of a whole community of like minded people all sharing in Irish traditional music, song and dance culture.

It allows musicians to connect with each all over the world and brings a sense of home abroad.

Siofra McHugh, Comhaltas Sydney Australia

New Branch Plan

So you'd like to open a branch – where do you start? These are some useful steps to get things moving:

Assess the need for a branch

Is there an Irish scene in your area; a regular local session for example? Is there local talent and potential to showcase through Comhaltas?

Notify Comhaltas

Speak to your county or provincial board about your intentions. If you're located outside Ireland, Britain or North America, speak directly to Head Office in Dublin

Plan your activities and budget

Funding can be obtained from local arts groups, councils, Trusts, foreign embassies, sponsorships – research what's out there for you

Organise a launch event

This is a great opportunity to grow membership for your branch. Invite local musicians to perform; feature guest speakers to mark the occasion

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Identify key people

Think about committee members who share your passion, tutors for classes, volunteers for events etc.

Hold your first meeting

This could be an open meeting to gauge interest, or an AGM to appoint a committee depending on point 2

Recruit members

Focus on young people and volunteers. Your committee treasurer is in charge of collecting all membership fees.

At your meeting you can appoint a **committee**, with roles including:

CATHAOIRLEACH / CHAIR

Head of the committee and responsible for the efficient working of their branch.



RÚNAÍ / SECRETARY

A good organiser, methodical, tactful and, above all, reliable. This officer has many varied duties including the management all branch correspondence



CISTEOIR / TREASURER

Responsible for the financial affairs of the branch, including membership fees



OIFIGEAGH CAIDRIMH POIBLÍ / PRO

Responsible for ensuring that the best possible image of Comhaltas and the branch is projected to the public at all times



INIÚCHÓIR / AUDITOR

This member works closely with the Cisteoir / Treasurer, signing financial statements and scrutinising all branch income and expenditure



OIFIGEACH NA NÓG / YOUTH OFFICER

The majority of branch members are young people, so this officer has an important job in providing youth support



New Branch Checklist

- APPROVAL FROM COMHALTAS HEAD OFFICE
- COMMITTEE APPOINTED
- BRANCH NAME CHOSEN
- BUDGET PLANNED
- BANK ACCOUNT CREATED
- ACTIVITY PLAN FOR THE YEAR
- WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIAS CREATED
- LAUNCH EVENT ORGANISED
- MEMBERSHIP GROWTH PLAN

Notes:

**Stay in touch via email and social media.
We'd love to see what you get up to and share your
achievements to an international audience.**



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